

Daniel P. Jowdy

State of CT Board of Examiners for Embalmers & Funeral Directors

In opposition of H.B. 5244

An Act Concerning the Provisions of Certain Beverages and Food at Funeral Homes

Dear Senator Gerratana, Senator Welch, Representative Johnson, Representative Srinivasan and members of the Public Health Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on HB 5244, An Act Concerning the Provision of Certain Beverages and Food at Funeral Homes.

My name is Daniel P. Jowdy, I am the Chairman of the State of Connecticut Board of Examiners of Embalmers and Funeral Directors often referred to as the State Board. Our jurisdiction is to oversee the entire licensed funeral profession in the State of Connecticut. Appointed by the Governor, we are a board of three funeral director and two public members.

The issue of food and beverage has been one of much discussion among the profession. It was previously introduced and subsequently withdrawn due to the divisiveness it has caused.

The CT State Board has polled all licensed funeral home in the state in the past month. 300 licensed establishments were contacted. **Of the 300 hundred, 189 homes opposed HB 5244, 47 were in favor of HB 5244 and 64 did not care to respond.**

The serving of certain beverages and food is not as simple as simply setting out a pot of coffee and a tray of cookies. It constitute the involvement of local health departments that have jurisdiction to regulate, inspect and license all establishments preparing and or serving food to the general public as well as the required certification of an individual or individuals in the funeral home as trained food handlers.

There are safety concerns both for the general public and also for what food and beverage might invite and potentially cause damage to the property as well as a dead body.

We are available to discuss this matter further.